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OC WEEKLY

MAXIMUM LOVE

MaxLove Project helps children with cancer through better diets, nontraditional therapies and whatever else it takes—including cannabis

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FROM AMERICA'S GOT TALENT AND DEAL OR NO DEAL

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SAT, AUG 3

ALSO ON SALE

MARY J. BLIGE
SAT, AUG 10

LANCE BURTON
SAT, AUG 17

BOZ SCAGGS
FRI, AUG 23

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SCOTT FEINBLATT

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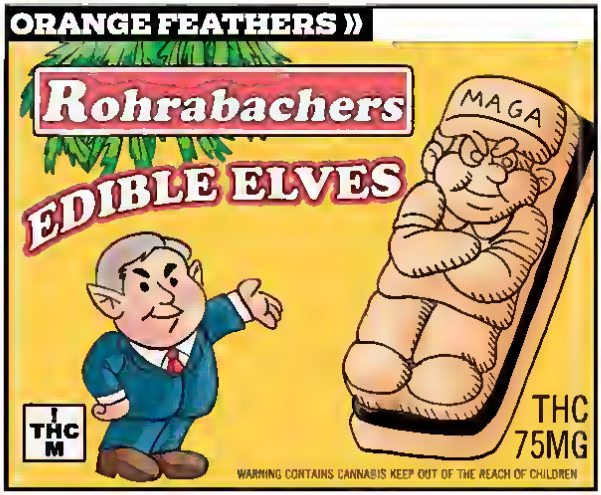

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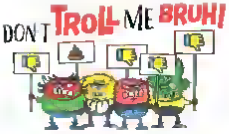

"Forty five thousand illegals have crossed the border recently, and they come from 52 countries. It's not just Mexicans, and it is a problem. You need to get your information from somewhere besides *OC Weekly*, MSNBC or CNN."

—Gene Rek, commenting on Matt Coker's "This Just In: Santa Ana Police Department Chills ICE Raids" (June 27)

We respond: Gene, we can't hear you. Can you turn down the volume on FOX News?

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Poisoning the Press

Records show DA's effort to spin a Newport Beach doctor into a serial-rapist monster

Newly reviewed government communications underscore how Tony Rackauckas' spin machine inside his Orange County district attorney's office (OCDA) manipulated reporters around the world last fall by selling a sensational, dishonest, serial-rape case against a Newport Beach doctor and his girlfriend.

At the time, Rackauckas, already in office for two decades, desperately wanted to retain control of the powerful law-enforcement agency from an advancing Todd Spitzer, his longtime nemesis, in November's election.

moxley CONFIDENTIAL

» R. SCOTT MOXLEY

The incumbent DA's charges against then-38-year-old Dr. Grant Robicheaux and Cerissa Riley, 31, breathed life into his faltering campaign by providing months of millions of dollars' worth of free international news coverage that portrayed Rackauckas as a noble protector of abused women.

Incredibly, the responding 2,806 pre-election media reports in radio broadcasts, network-TV shows and newspapers couldn't save Rackauckas. His image had already been soiled after spending years stumbling through a series of courthouse scandals all with the same motive: not justice, but winning at all costs. Spitzer now occupies the office.

But, as OCDA emails show, the defeated DA's taxpayer-funded public-relations operation worked feverishly behind the scenes to transform *People v. Robicheaux and Riley* from a calm, fact-based prosecution into a media spectacle designed to hand the 75-year-old Rackauckas the biggest plank of his re-election campaign.

In multiple press conferences, numerous press releases, dozens and dozens of telephone calls, and constant emails, the prosecutorial PR machine gave the impression the couple had been roaming monsters, using good looks and charisma to find unsuspecting victims at bars, planting powerful knockout drugs in their drinks, then ushering their prey home to videotape themselves conducting rapes.

That tale put some of the world's most powerful media organizations—*The New York Times*, *Dr. Phil*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, ABC, CBS, NBC, BBC, *Rolling Stone* and *USA Today*, for example—at Susan Kang Schroeder's feet. Schroeder was Rackauckas' chief OCDA flack, private campaign manager and gatekeeper with lone approval to grant or block access to her boss. She maintained a well-earned reputation for rewarding hagiographic coverage, which explains why, according to one of the emails, she secretly gave ABC's *Good Morning America* an exclusive in the case while pretending to other outlets she wasn't playing favorites.

The resulting feeding frenzy may be Schroeder's greatest, most devious known work—never mind that it robbed two constitutionally presumed innocent pretrial defendants of their rights to due process. A sampling of the headlines reveals what anyone should have known was a lie generated by a shameless DA's office: "CA Surgeon, Girlfriend Accused of Rape, Possibly Preyed on More than 1,000 Victims", "TV Surgeon and Girlfriend Stun and Rape Over 1,000 Women", "Surgeon From Bravo Reality Show Charged with Rape, May Have 1,000+ Victims", "Reality TV Surgeon and His Lover Feared to Have Drugged and Raped Up to 1,000 Women on Camera After Luring Them From Bars and Festivals", "Man Featured on Bravo Dating Show Charged With Rape, Other Felonies, Might Be 'a Thousand' Other Victims, DA says."

One mainstream-television-network reporter believed it was her role to sell the OCDA's case, sending a "Dear Brave Women" letter to the supposed victims and making this point in hopes of winning exclusive interviews, with Schroeder's assistance: "I would like the opportunity to speak with you before the defense begins their campaign; that way, we can have your side of the story already out."

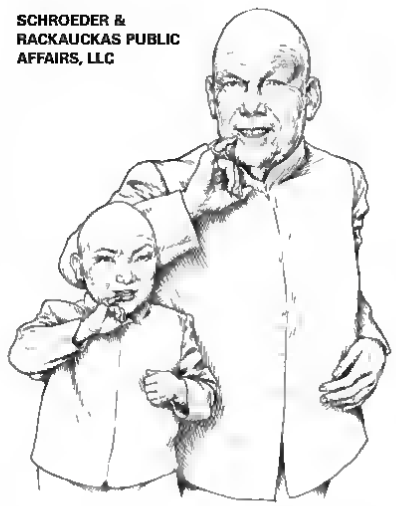
Within the first weeks of the case, the *Weekly* began investigating, discovering that its foundation was based on three old cases described most generously as weak. You don't have to rely on our word. Newport Beach Police Department probes couldn't verify the rape stories, even saw holes in them and documented those facts in their official reports.

Meanwhile, there is reality to consider. If Rackauckas' tale is correct, Robicheaux would possess superhuman powers. Is it really possible that he victimized 9.6 women per week on average during a two-year period?

After the *Weekly* first exposed the shenanigans in an Oct. 31 article, some journalists began voicing concerns about being duped. ABC News producer Jim Vojtech sent such an email to the OCDA on Nov 5. Incensed the concocted tale showed signs of crumbling, Schroeder—who nowadays is a practicing private media consultant—sent a high-importance memo to Rackauckas, alerting him to the situation. The next day, the DA, who'd trampled four of his five prior opponents, lost to Spitzer by 60,000 votes.

Orange County is a place where irony abounds. Spitzer, the new DA who criticized the case last year, is now backing it. Given the Rackauckas/Schroeder mess he inherited, he should tread carefully. Defense lawyers insist not a single video shows anyone being clandestinely drugged or raped, whether conscious or not.

There's a July 26 pretrial hearing scheduled in Newport Beach's Harbor Court.



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PAUL NAGEL

GAY-CONVERSION DUDE UPSET

A pastor, who claims he was gay for several years before self-identifying as "a former homosexual," marrying a woman and having three kids, is suing Vimeo, the online video platform giant, for removing 89 of his films preaching sexual-orientation conversion.

In his 13-page federal lawsuit filed in Orange County, James Domen, founder of Church United, wants his videos restored on Vimeo's website, plus more than $79,000 in compensation for what he's calling illegal, "oppressive censorship" and violations of California's statutory protections based on sexual orientation.

Vimeo terminated Domen's account in December, sending correspondence that the company "does not allow videos that harass, incite hatred, or include discriminatory or defamatory speech."

The pastor believes the move tramples his free-speech rights and is hypocritical, noting the company accepts videos "which advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) students who are bullied or discriminated against."

Attorneys for Vimeo have less than three weeks to file a formal response in court.

For unknown reasons, Orange County has been a national hotbed of gay-conversion-therapy advocates for decades and may have comprised the perfect jury pool for the plaintiff.

Though filed in the Ronald Reagan Federal Courthouse in Santa Ana, Domen's lawsuit was moved to a more gay-friendly Los Angeles, where U.S. District Court Judge Stephen V. Wilson will preside.

Nada Higuera, Domen's attorney, has worked for Focus On the Family, a Christian, conservative project of evangelist James Dobson, one of the country's most vocal and well-funded anti-gay advocates.

KAMALA HARRIS HYPOCRISY

The national media continues to fawn over U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, who is running for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. Before her current gig, Harris served as California's attorney general, and in that role, she played a major villain in what is known nationally as the Orange County jailhouse-snitch scandal. Sheriff's deputies, with the protection of local prosecutors, ran unconstitutional scams against pretrial inmates, destroyed evidence and committed perjury.

Harris knew of the corruption, having placed an aide in the front row of the Santa Ana courtroom where the scandal unfolded in 2014-16. But she did worse than nothing. As a PR stunt, she pretended to open a real investigation that, as she finally admitted this year, wasn't intended to hold anyone accountable and didn't. Now, her pals in the media are returning the favor by letting her get away with declaring during the first televised presidential debate that she is all about "honesty" and "speaking with truth."

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

» GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

GABRIEL SAN ROMAN

Tune Town

The Hook and Ladder Company drew their usual crowd on Sept. 18 in front of the Disneyland Fire Department. Donning old-timey firemen uniforms, the piano, drum-and brass band entertained onlookers with Dixieland jazz, adding to the whimsical wonder of Main Street USA. Little did parkgoers know that it would be the musicians' swan song.

Disney creatives have trended toward a drum-and-bugle-corps sound nowadays, giving the Hook and Ladder Company the shaft. With the beloved group founded by former members of the original Disneyland Band now gone, there's an adage that comes to mind: Where there's smoke, there's fire.

Live music overall at the Disneyland Resort has been undergoing some changes. The new Disneyland Band, which debuted during the park's diamond anniversary in 2015, is pretty popular with parkgoers, but all is not harmonious. Shortly after the Hook and Ladder Company layoffs, musicians with two full-time bands in New Orleans Square had their shifts cut down, all but ensuring hours and benefits would disappear by year's end.

"Some of them are scrambling, trying to bridge the gap with their sick time and vacation days to retain benefits," says Edmund Velasco, vice president of American Federation of Musicians Local 7.

It's a scenario that's all too familiar for Disney California Adventure musicians.

"They don't really want to have full-time musicians," says Velasco of DCA's operations team. "There's nobody there who's scheduled five days a week in the same band."

Velasco started playing tenor sax with the original Disneyland Band before returning from the company in April, so he knows live music is an essential part of the magic. It gives parkgoers an experience that a loop blaring from a speaker—or an animatronic DJ R3X at Oga's Cantina—cannot.

"When people go to the park, they're just thrilled to be able to see somebody actually performing live for them," says Velasco. "There's a connection that a musician can achieve with the audience that can't be replicated any other way."

GSANROMAN@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Bowled Over

BOB AUL

You are the young man going into a Flame Broiler trying to get some lunch. As you were walking in, a random lady caught your attention and had an indistinguishable conversation with you. You bought your food and added something more to your usual order. You left discreetly and gave that woman who grabbed you at the door your extra chicken bowl. You never stopped to ask her why she needed lunch or why the store owner gave both of you weird looks. You just bought her a meal, even if you may have your own student loans to worry about. Thank you for your random act of kindness and for acting without hesitation!

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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MAXIMUM LOVE

MaxLove Project helps children with cancer through better diets, nontraditional therapies and whatever else it takes–including cannabis

By Jefferson VanBilliard

ALEX FRANKEL

AUDRA WILFORD, CENTER, HELPS CANCER-STRICKEN FAMILIES

COURTESY OF MAXLOVE PROJECT

Inside a comfortable office located just outside the shadow of the massive Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC) care facility sits Audra Wilford, founder of the MaxLove Project. The Orange-based charity works to increase the quality of life and reduce the health risks of all children fighting cancer in treatment and beyond. Since the foundation started in 2011, countless families in multiple countries have received help not only in navigating the path toward remission, but also in thriving long after they experience one of the most difficult times imaginable.

"The most important thing for us is to get the message out that we, as a community, can be more empowered to help patients and their families," Wilford says. "Our nonprofit is focused on wellness using evidence-based nutrition to improve the quality of life for childhood-cancer survivors."

She and her husband, Justin, have worked tirelessly through their MaxLove Project for nearly eight years to bring hope to people who are faced with very few options after a child is diagnosed. "Right now in the U.S., over 420,000 childhood cancer survivors are alive because of advancements in treatment and screening," Wilford says. "We are focused on mitigating the overwhelming amount of statistics that come with survivorship, meaning that the same treatments that save these children's lives also present challenges and threaten to compromise their lives later on."

Wilford has become an anchor for families facing cancer. The nonprofit was named for her son Max, who was diagnosed in 2011 with mixed-grade brain stem glioma, a common type of brain cancer that requires chemotherapy and a difficult, sometimes fatal partial resection surgery. The then-5-year-old was rushed to CHOC, where surgeons partially removed a tumor. As the boy spent three weeks in recovery, his parents decided to make his journey toward survival their full-time focus. Consulting with doctors, researchers and other cancer survivors, they began to look into other factors, besides standard treatment, that could improve Max's quality of life as well as help him with functioning, pain levels and sleep patterns—whatever could improve his chances of survivorship.

The regimen of comprehensive therapies they came up with for their son included a year and a half of chemotherapy sessions, acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and physical therapy. Wilford is convinced that without each aspect, Max would not have achieved the superior quality of life and continued health he enjoys today. Now 14, he is more likely to be seen on his bicycle than in a treatment center.

Max's recovery was the catalyst for his parents to start the MaxLove Project. "One of the things that has defined MaxLove Project is our relationship with physicians, doctors and the hospitals we work with," Wilford explains. "We fill a void in health care that isn't the business of the hospital. Their job is to save lives, which isn't necessarily synonymous with quality of life. Our work is complementary to what these doctors are doing to eradicate the cancer inside of someone's body.

"When it comes to the diet, nutrition and wellness practices we provide, it's all about building bridges between treatment and ongoing survivorship," she continues. "I believe the doctors we work with see it that way as well."

Among the medical advances MaxLove Project focuses on is the benefits of safe, lab-tested cannabis, which can change a child's life during such a difficult time. "This year, we decided it was time to lend our voice to aid those in the fight toward cannabis advocacy," Wilford says. "It's time for us to use our unique approach because we are wellness-based. This isn't about just this plant; this is about creating a healthy routine, and one small facet of a larger plan is what this medicine has the potential to do."

Though the existence of the cannabis plant has caused panic, outrage and prison sentences throughout history, Wilford has found it also has the ability to provide families with yet another holistic tool in the fight against cancer.

However, a scan of the MaxLove Project website shows very few traces of any cannabis-related material. That's deliberate. Considering the lack of federal support for the use of cannabis as a medical option, starting out as a staunch supporter would have likely compromised the legitimacy of the nonprofit. Yet Wilford sees more people opening up to the idea. As for any lingering stigma, she was already prepared for the critics thanks to having been battle-tested through MaxLove Project's stand on foods.

"Believe it or not, when we first started, our Culinary Medicine Program was controversial," Wilford says. "People would look at us and say, 'You think food matters?' And once we smoothed that over, we started talking about a ketogenic diet, which focuses on eating foods that are high-fat and low-carb. Even that was contentious."

For children and their families enduring the long road toward remission, health-care costs present yet another obstacle in their path. MaxLove Project works with a highly skilled, diverse group of doctors, nurses, dietitians, chefs, farmers and integrative-medicine practitioners to offer free classes on everything from dietary options to cooking techniques that will benefit not only the child whose life is at risk, but also the entire family in a way that leaves a lasting effect. "Cancer affects everyone, regardless of income," Wilford says. "There are families in central Santa Ana, where we see a 40 percent obesity rate, with their grandmothers or great-grandmothers still living at home and teaching them how to make food that is real. You'll see these amazing broths and all kinds of therapeutic foods.

"Then there's the mom who lives in Coto de Caza, and she is three generations into not cooking," she continues. "That family's cabinets are filled with Go-Gurts, Fritos and Capri Suns. One of the things we work on with families is to identify their health goals, with cancer, it's never a 'blanket statement' or a one-size-fits-all solution. If we were able to eradicate obesity today, it would take three generations of children being born for us to see certain genetic predispositions disappear from our bodies."

For families on shoestring budgets, Wilford recommends focusing on whole foods—items such as fresh vegetables, whole grains and proteins that are low in sodium—rather than spending more on organically grown items. "It may seem counterintuitive, but if you are in the middle of fighting for your life against an active disease, an organic Pop-Tart is not going to help save you," Wilford points out. "When one of our oncologists contacts us, one of the first things we provide to families, besides our countless outreach programs, is our bone broth."

The Broth Bank, supported by Santa Ana's Electric City Butcher, offers families the sustenance free of charge. The broth replenishes the minerals a body desperately needs after the rigors of a chemotherapy session, and Wilford has seen firsthand how invigorating it is for the families to experience something as simple as a home-cooked meal.

MAXLOVE PROJECT TEACHES COOKING TECHNIQUES TO CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

COURTESY OF MAXLOVE PROJECT

"It is incredible to see the quality of life these children have achieved through acupuncture, dietary changes and other holistic paths that our foundation is able to offer," she says. "When you look at all of these things together, what we are talking about is in our heritage, we, as a society, are starting to learn that this is all medicine that is thousands of years old. It's very powerful that we are no longer trusting convenience, we need to get back into the kitchen!"

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

FEDERICO MEDINA

MAXIMUM LOVE

» FROM PAGE 9

Deep inside Santa Ana's "Green Zone," the mostly industrial area that houses the majority of Orange County's legal cannabis dispensaries, is Kannabis Works. Founder and CEO Jason Lilly smiles as he recalls the events that led to him connecting with the MaxLove Project.

"We spent three years dealing with all the bureaucracy and legalities of opening Kannabis Works," Lilly explains. "During that time, we pivoted our business somewhat and opened a wellness center that was more of a one-on-one doctor/patient-style environment in Irvine. We partnered with a company in Northern California, and we were able to provide high-quality oils and consultations to families from all over the nation in need of this type of care."

The dispensary, which opened its doors to the public in February 2018, has been paving its own path in advancing the idea that cannabis can be a helpful addition to the fight against cancer. "Cannabis is not the end-all to everything," Lilly concedes, "but it can provide help for people during treatment and beyond. That's one of the reasons why we wanted to work with MaxLove; they're focused on a much-larger picture."

In the Kannabis Works showroom, shelves and tables display more topicals and vaporizer products than actual flowers, and you aren't likely to see any edibles that resemble the sour, sugary candy that line the aisles of your local convenience store.

Shelly McKay, Kannabis Works' health-and-wellness director, believes it's the dispensary's duty to the community to provide safe holistic solutions to the cancer epidemic in the U.S. and, hopefully, the rest of the world. "There's such an unregulated market right now," McKay says. "From seed to sale, we know that our products are safe and have gone through rigorous testing to ensure the quality of care we bring to our clients. We only bring in clean product."

That is especially true, McKay notes, when it comes to young cancer patients. "It's important for a child that is undergoing these treatments, when they have an immunocompromised system, that they receive this clean medicine," she adds.

Lilly interjects. "When you look at what we, as a company, are doing right now, this represents what the medical-cannabis industry should look like. When medical cannabis became legal, this is what the voters had envisioned: not only a facility that provides safe access to cannabis, but also a place that strives to meet a level of care that many will never experience."

It's clear Kannabis Works sought to stand out from the dime-a-dozen dispensaries that sprouted up after California voters approved Proposition 64 in 2016. "We shop for certain formulations, not only ratios," McKay says. "When you're considering what medicine is right for you, there isn't a 'cure all' strain or product that will work for everyone."

Asked what consumers should look for when researching their own needs, she warns, "It has very little to do with whether or not the plants' genetics fall into the traditional categories of indica or sativa. What we look at, besides the chemovars [the varied chemical composition of a particular plant based on its growing conditions], is the technique used for extraction."

For consumers comparing one concentrate to the seemingly endless supply of new products flowing into dispensaries daily, a CO_2 extraction—which is a method that removes solid matter, leaving only the cannabinoids behind—may sound healthier than its ethanol counterpart. But this isn't necessarily true; because of a chemical reaction, the terpenes (organic compounds found in the essential oils of plants) end up getting lost or muddled during the extraction process. This forces manufacturers to add their own terpene profiles in a Frankenstein-like manner that ends up tasting overproduced and unnatural. "Ultimately, we really shop for reputable producers,"

McKay says. "When we recommend something to a patient, it's because we believe in its ability to help them specifically. That's why we have such a wide variety of products to pull from. The interesting thing is that, for most of the companies that are packaged and marketed as more medicinally focused, they may not do as well in a traditional dispensary."

Adds Lilly, "Like us, these companies don't fit into the traditional mold, and oftentimes, their product requires a bit more attention and guidance in order to see the advantages from using it. That's where we fit in."

Lilly and McKay don't just talk the talk. In addition to dealing with the day-to-day rigors of owning a small business, they provide outreach programs to veterans, seniors and families who are trying to explore every option when it comes to their mental and physical well-being through Wellness Works, which focuses on holistic approaches to health care and offers multiple community-outreach classes on dietary planning and using cannabis as a medicine. The program, which operates out of a room just beyond the state-of-the-art storefront, also provides a platform for experts to give insight to people who are struggling with the mental and physical health issues that go along with surviving a traumatic event.

"Wellness Works is a company that doesn't touch the plant, so we have a lot more freedom with what we can do in that room, as opposed to the restrictions of operating a licensed dispensary," Lilly explains. "The consulting and education side of it is really the foundation of what we, as a company, aim to accomplish."

Inside the MaxLove Project's humble offices, I'm reminded that it works with local businesses, both in and out of the cannabis industry, to raise not only awareness, but also the monetary funds to fuel their community efforts and provide the care that sick children and their families desperately need. For example, the nonprofit partnered with dozens of companies, including Cannalysis and Chapman Crafted Beer, for a charity golf event at the Aliso Viejo Country Club in April.

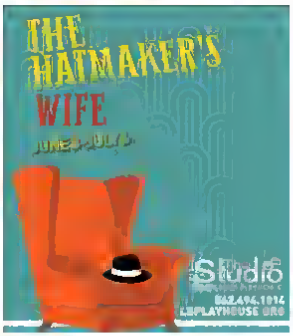
There's also the Ohana Project, a 12-week course rigorously designed and studied by a team of highly regarded pediatric clinicians (including Dr. Ruth McCarty, the clinical director of Chinese medicine and acupuncture at CHOC) that targets whole-family health and is built on connecting cancer patients with one another, recognizing that everyone affected by childhood cancer is a part of one big family.

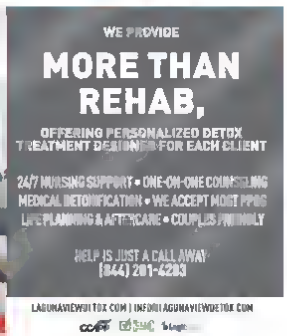
"Anyone that questions the idea of cannabis as a medicine for our families should see some of the children that we've had coming through here," Wilford says. "Some of them are unable to walk, most of them have trouble with their eating habits and sleep patterns, which is essential to change when they're fighting disease. Once we start them on cannabis, we quickly see results. These kids are able to eat and sleep, which helps them gain strength, and pretty soon, they're walking again."

She lets out a hopeful sigh and adds, "It's that process of not only improving quality of life, but also improving the strength and well-being for patients as a cumulative routine that ends up providing the necessary tools these children need to survive. Coming out of treatment, the body is heavily disempowered, and your immune system has been destroyed. Following the evidence we provide can mean a world of difference to these children in such a fragile state. We are trying to raise the bar."

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

COURTESY OF MAXLOVE PROJECT

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fri/07/05

[FILM]

High-Flying Flynn

The Adventures of Robin Hood

Arrive early at the Norma Kershaw Auditorium for film aficionado Theo Siegel's discussion about the 1938 classic Hollywood swashbuckling adventure-romance filmed in vivid Technicolor. *The Adventures of Robin Hood* features an all-star cast hamming it up in a joyously contrived revisionist telling of an English legend, that of the forest-dwelling outlaw who robs from the rich and gives to the 99 percent. Look up in the trees, clad in forest green, with archery and sword-play ... it's Errol Flynn as Sir Robin of Locksley, Olivia de Havilland as Lady Marian and Basil Rathbone as evil Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

The Adventures of Robin Hood at the Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600, www.bowers.org. 7 p.m. $15. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

[RECREATION]

Splish Splash

Waterballoonza

Does your inner child get as excited at the words *water balloon fight* as ours do? Head to Out of the Park Pizza's grand reopening celebration for Waterballoonza, a summer extravaganza at which guests can frolic and play while being splashed with more than 10,000 water balloons. Guests are welcome to bring their own Super Soakers (and if you don't already have one of those lying around, are you even living?). Bottom line, you will get wet, so bring your own towels, waterproof your valuables and wear an outfit you can get recklessly drenched in. When you're not making a soaking spectacle of yourself, enjoy the craft beer and food for sale, as well as some live music.

Waterballoonza at Out of the Park Pizza, 5638 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, (714) 777-4992, www.outoftheparkpizza.com. 5:30 p.m. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

sat/07/06

[SPORTS]

WHAM! BAM! South Coast Roller Derby

As the only nonprofit, skater-owned and -operated roller derby in south Orange County, South Coast Roller Derby has two obligations: represent the OC by playing by the rules and standards set by the Women's FlatTrack Derby Association, and kick ass. The all-female skate team do both extremely well at every home and away bout across the country. Tonight, one of its teams, the Demented Danas, go against the SoCal Cuttlefish at Laguna Hills Community Center. See the high-flying leaps and spills play out on the flat track and show support for the home team by wearing some red, white and blue!

South Coast Roller Derby at Laguna Hills Community Center, 25555 Alicia Pkwy., Laguna Hills, (949) 707-2680; www.southcoastrollerderby.com. 7 p.m. $10-$12; kids 10 and younger, free. —AIMEE MURILLO

[FOOD & DRINK]

Bend and Chug

Brewery Yoga

Beer yoga is simply one of those Southern California-esque trends that refuses to die, so damn it, we're gonna cave and give in to it, too. For the uninitiated, you bend and stretch with a pint of beer in your hand and take sips whenever you like, all while getting those chakras aligned and your body relaxed and made flexible. No need to be a seasoned yogi to partake, as all levels are welcome and will be guided through meditation and stretching by the teachers from Mixx Yoga. Bring your yoga mat, appropriate dress and eager attitude as we dive into one of the most deliciously fun bandwagons of our generation.

MORE ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

Brewery Yoga at Asylum Brewing, 2970 La Palma Ave., Ste. D, Anaheim, (949) 396-2099; mixxyoga.com. 11 a.m. $18. 21+. —AIMEE MURILLO

sun/07/07

[THEATER]

The Payback

The Merchant of Venice

Considered one of the most controversial of the Bard's comedies because of its characters' religious and racial prejudices, *The Merchant of Venice* deals with a young Venetian named Bassanio who aims to woo a wealthy heiress, but he can't provide as a suitor thanks to squandering his estate and being broke. So he approaches his friend Antonio for help, but Antonio is strapped for cash, so he borrows from the Jewish moneylender Shylock, who only agrees on the condition of taking a pound of Antonio's flesh if he is unable to pay. See how this intriguing story plays out at the New Swan's beautiful outdoor stage.

The Merchant of Venice at New Swan Theater at UC Irvine, 4002 Mesa Rd., Irvine; newswanshakespeare.com. 8 p.m. Through Aug. 31. $13–$41. —AIMEE MURILLO

[FESTIVALS]

Under the Sun

Sunsets at the Zoo

Wind down the weekend with this low-key, after-hours concert series hosted by Santa Ana Zoo. Tribute group High In the 80's will serenade the crowd in attendance, and guests are invited to bring their own picnic fixings and relax under the glowing sunset. Children can enjoy the train and carousel rides, work on arts and crafts, or visit the residents of the zoo. For an extra donation, adults can check out the beer garden and take part in a craft-beer tasting provided by Cismontane, Network Brewery and Santa Ana River Brewing.

Sunsets at the Zoo at Santa Ana Zoo, 1801 E. Chestnut Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 836-4000, www.santaanazoo.org. 5:30 p.m. $9.95–$19.95. —AIMEE MURILLO

SURF ISSUE

PUBLISHES
07/25/19

OCWEEKLY. ORANGE COUNTY'S LEADING SOURCE OF NEWS, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT

mon/07/08

[FILM]

Rewrite the Stars

The Greatest Showman

Hugh Jackman is taking his fantastic catalog of songs on the road this summer, performing at large venues, arenas and amphitheaters. If that's a little too rich for you financially and culturally, then the Segerstrom Center is here to help. The Movies on the Lawn series brings one of Jackman's latest films, 2017's *The Greatest Showman*, to the masses. The song-and-dance man stars as the legendary P.T. Barnum in this chronicle of his rise to fame—in musical form of course.

The Greatest Showman at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787, www.scfta.org. 8 p.m. Free. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

tue/07/09

[ART]

Art History Lives

Festival of Arts Pageant of the Masters

The Festival of the Arts in Laguna Beach exhibits a juried show that features the works of 140 of the top Orange County artists in an open-air gallery. Guests can observe demonstrations, create their own works, check out on-site restaurants, and enjoy the charms of a rotating schedule of live music and special events. Also, Pageant of the Masters will showcase live re-creations of classic paintings at the amphitheater. This year's Pageant, titled "The Time Machine," combines theater, performance art and art history for a highly memorable production.

Festival of Arts Pageant of the Masters at Festival of Arts, 650 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach, (800) 487-3378; www.foapom.com. Noon. Through Aug. 31. Festival, $5–$15; pageant, $20–$198. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

wed/07/10

[FILM]

ALWAYS A CLASSIC

Alien

In the late 1970s, friendly extraterrestrials were all the rage in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Superman*, even the amicably mythical *Star Wars*, but director Ridley Scott and screenwriter Dan O'Bannon (*Heavy Metal*, *Total Recall*) opted for a grimmer take on science fiction—and unwittingly launched the first of an iconic franchise that remains the top-grossing sci-fi horror film in history (when adjusted for inflation). Featuring a cast of notables including John Hurt, Harry Dean Stanton and Veronica Cartwright, *Alien* was Sigourney Weaver's first lead role, and her tenacious turn as the no-nonsense Ripley earned her a BAFTA for most promising newcomer. Filled with slimy face-suckers, screeching spawns, exploding stomachs (filmed in one take with four cameras) and a durable orange tabby named Jones, this is one epic space terror best on the big screen.

Alien at Regency South Coast Village, 1561 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701, www.regencymovies.com. 7:30 p.m. $9.50. —SR. DAVIES

COURTESY OF THE OC FAIR

[CONCERT]

The Smooth Touch

Seal

Want to feel old? Seal's landmark pop-crossover radio hit, "Kiss From a Rose" from the *Batman Forever* soundtrack, is almost 25 years old. What's even more impressive than seeing him onstage doing his thing is that he has extended his success beyond singing. He was a host of the Australian version of *The Voice* and has made a slew of other appearances. As for his main gig, Seal hits the road this summer for a handful of smaller dates, a tour that kicks off in Orange County. Expect him to tear through his vast catalog, which now includes his latest studio album, *Standards*.

Seal with Rennie Adams at Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500, pacamp.com. 7:30 p.m. $40. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

thu/07/11

MATTHEW MURPHY

[PERFORMING ARTS]

Ghastly and Good

The Phantom of the Opera

It takes a lot of chutzpah to task yourself with reinventing a classic such as this. But that's exactly what the creative team behind the currently touring *Phantom of the Opera* Broadway musical did. Dubbed "bigger and better," "brilliant," and "breath-taking" by press, this rendition of Andrew Lloyd Webber's mega smash swings by the Segerstrom Center as part of its North American run. Expect a whole new scenic design, more elaborate costumes, and even better special effects. If you've already seen *Phantom*, this may be the rare opportunity to experience it as never before.

The Phantom of the Opera, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787, www.scfta.org. 2 & 7:30 p.m. Through July 21. $35.75-$165.75. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

OUTTA SIGHT! Tributes to the Temptations and Stevie Wonder

Between the Temptations and Stevie Wonder, the two have dozens of memorable hits, including "My Girl" and "My Cherie Amour," respectively. So the Legends of Motown tribute showcase at the House of Blues in Anaheim tonight will be an enjoyable treat for fans of both. But as much as we're looking forward to hearing covers of their massively popular catalogs, we're hoping to also get later material that reflected their individual concerns for the state of the world during the late '60s and '70s, such as "Ball of Confusion" and "Living for the City." If you're in the same boat, or if you just want to relish listening to classics performed live, check this show out. Either way, it'll be a great representation of these Motown heroes' legacies.

Legends of Motown presents Tributes to the Temptations and Stevie Wonder at the House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583. www.houseofblues.com/anaheim. 7 p.m. $15. —AIMEE MURILLO

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CHANGE IS GOOD

SHANNON AFFAIR

Think Different

The new Casablanca The Restaurant is different in all the ways that matter from the Moroccan establishment it replaced

BY EDWIN GOEI

When I included the new Moroccan place in Costa Mesa called Casablanca The Restaurant in my weekly blog roundup of new eateries a few months ago, I had no intention of reviewing it. It was previously another Moroccan restaurant, one that I've featured numerous times in these pages. Although it changed hands, from what I saw of Casablanca's menu, it looked as if it served the same kind of meals I remembered having at the old establishment. In the restaurant biz, this happens all the time. And as a general rule, I never revisit a place when it changes names or ownership because there's usually nothing new to talk about.

But then something happened with that innocuous post. People affiliated with the old eatery started to comment on it, protesting that Casablanca was "trying to create the impression that it is the same restaurant" when, in fact, it was a "totally different business."

Those comments made me curious. If it were truly "totally different," then I needed to know how. So I drove there one Saturday night and immediately noticed the first important difference. Parking was now on a free, self-park lot. At the old place, $4 valet parking was the only option. Also, the entrance to the restaurant was no longer at the front, facing Newport Boulevard. It was now on the side of the building through what resembled an emergency exit. But as I went through the double doors, I saw the biggest change of all: Gone were the tarps that used to separate sections of the room into a series of Bedouin tents. Now that the dining area was more open, I could see the belly-dancer as she shimmied from one end of the packed restaurant to the other.

That belly-dancer—a Shania Twain lookalike—was the same person I remembered from my last visit to the old place. And as I found my seat, she was teaching her moves to a little girl, who was herself dressed in a sequined belly-dancing costume. The girl's parents and grandparents were overjoyed at the scene, taking videos on their cellphones and clapping along to the rhythmic music. When the grandfather tucked a dollar bill into his granddaughter's waistband as a joke, they all laughed.

Shortly after, a server came to take my order. Thinking I'd be bothered being around so many families with kids, he apologized and offered to seat me somewhere else. I told him I appreciated the gesture, but I was fine where I was. Watching others have a good time was part of the experience. I mentioned that I'd been coming to the old place for years, also loudly celebrating birthdays and tipping many a dollar bill to many a belly-dancer. But I was curious about the story behind this new place. He told me the previous restaurant closed when the owner passed away. He said that when the new owners took over, they remodeled but also brought back the old crew, even the chef.

The latter was confirmed when I tasted the food. It was familiar but also somehow better than I remembered. The couscous was so feather-light it seemed infused with helium. And for the first time, I noticed there were seven different vegetables in it, which the menu says is for good luck. Each of the vegetables, especially the zucchini and the pumpkin, melted on my spoon. The skewers that came with the couscous were also the best examples of shish kebabs I've had in a long time. The steak was well-seasoned and juicy; the chicken breast doubly so.

The lamb leg dripping with honey was, however, the thing to order. It was a spectacle—a whole fleshy hunk excised at the ball-and-socket joint, simmered so long it fell apart on the plate. While saffron and ras el hanout (an Arabic spice blend) complemented the rich flavor of the beast, caramelized onions, dates and a syrupy honey sauce tamed the gaminess.

But the lamb wasn't the only dish to combine the sweet with the savory. Casablanca, as did its predecessor, offers bastilla, a traditional Maghreb phyllo-dough pastry filled with spiced ground chicken and sliced almonds and finished with a blizzard of powdered sugar and cinnamon. If a Disneyland churro collided with a Disneyland turkey leg, it would taste almost like this.

There were also new things, including the kemiya, a Maghreb sampler platter that included hummus, dolmas, olives, pickles, bourek (an Arabian egg roll) and merguez (a spicy sausage). The plate was served with pita bread so supple I suspected it was freshly made in-house.

As I digested that wonderful meal, sipping mint tea from an ornate, long-necked pot, I realized I agreed with those commenters who said Casablanca is a totally different entity than what it replaced, a restaurant whose name I won't even mention here. In fact, I think it's better, and I wouldn't have found out for myself if they'd said nothing at all.

CASABLANCA THE RESTAURANT
1976 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, (949) 423-7690. Open Sun. & Tues.-Thurs., 5-9 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 5-10 p.m. Entrees, $14-$32. Beer and wine.

WHAT THE ALE
» GREG NAGEL

Beer Yoga

I was probably in the mountain pose when I learned about the Federal's addition of beer yoga in Long Beach. I quickly changed to the tree pose, not because I was exercising, but rather because I was grateful to learn about such a tranquil experience.

"*Namaste*," I thought to myself before chanting self-affirmations. "I'm really great at the corpse pose. I'm really great at the corpse pose," repeating and repeating until zoning out into full beer-yoga consciousness. Wait, how long was I asleep?

Federal's yoga includes two beers in the hour-long session, which is instructed by Stephanie Serrano. The classes will initially happen on the last Thursday of the month and may happen weekly, depending on interest.

Although beer and yoga are not new on their own, balancing beer drinking during poses might be. I can already imagine trying to lap up beer like a dog while in downward dog.

"We're excited to start hosting classes that will appeal to beer-loving yogis," said Jeff Osborn, the Federal's general manager. "Unlike most beer yoga classes, with attendees tasting beer following the class, we decided to take the approach of allowing attendees to enjoy sips of beer during the yoga class flow."

Space is limited to 25 people, and advance tickets are available online for $20 apiece. Walk-ins are welcome, provided there's space available. Attendees must be age 21 or older and are encouraged to arrive no later than 5:45 p.m. to choose their preferred beer from the special menu as well as reserve mat space on the floor.

BEER YOGA
at the Federal Underground, 102 Pine Ave., Long Beach, (562) 435-2000, thefederallb.com. Thurs., July 25, 6 p.m. $20.

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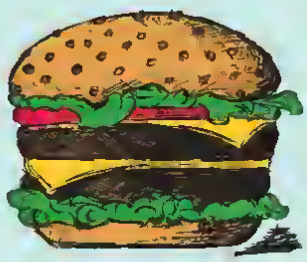
IT'S THE BURGER ISSUE



PUBLISHES
07/11/19

OCWEEKLY. ORANGE COUNTY'S LEADING SOURCE OF NEWS, CULTURE, AND ENTERTAINMENT

ERIN DEWITT

The Art of Toast

Coffee Parlor offers overdressed, yet satisfying bites

LONG BEACH LUNCH
» ERIN DEWITT

If you're looking for an Instagrammable bit of toast on the east side of Long Beach, you need to visit Coffee Parlor (a.k.a. COPA) on Clark Avenue and Spring Street. Founded by Joshua Knight, James Marland and Noah Schneider, this two-month-old coffee shop offers artisanal coffee from around the globe, plus a few breakfast options (including several close-up worthy fancy toasts) and a handful of lunch choices, such as the Market Salad.

That is, if you get there when the kitchen is still open. The website explains that while coffee is served from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., the kitchen is open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. But Coffee Parlor's physical, in-house menu clearly states, "Kitchen Hours Depends on the Tide." In other words, just come in the morning.

Nestled between a taco joint and a bundt-cake bakery in a small, suburban strip mall, Coffee Parlor operates as if it's in an artists' district in some hip urbania. Natural light floods the front dining area, and plants potted in paper bags dot every table. There's a specifically placed Gandhi quote about the importance of customers by the register. It's all very industrial-meets-midcentury-meets-arboretum.

Its coffee selection reads standard, with cappuccinos, flavored lattes, Americanos, cafe au laits and so on. But no matter your choice, what you get is excellent: smooth, dark and rich. Hunt around its social-media pages, and you'll discover more interesting concoctions such as the COPA Quencher, hot espresso poured over sugary Mexican Coke.

The menu offered by executive chef/co-founder Schneider may be pretty limited or, let's say, well-edited, but it's a smart move for a new cafe. Plus, the plating and presentation are wonderfully intricate.

The PB&J starts with a slab of thick, chewy toast. A massive smear of crunchy peanut butter holds up fruity jam, fresh blueberries and banana slices, granola, mascarpone, and bright-yellow dots of bee pollen. The price of this overdressed, open-faced peanut butter-and-jelly sandwich is $9, and though my mascarpone was nowhere in sight (I got a dusting of cocoa instead?), it was a satisfying plate.

While avocado toast is a dish that's been done, done, then done again, Coffee Parlor's version was equally as satiating and beautifully arranged as the PB&J. That same chewy toast (the bread's crust, though obviously fresh, was impervious to a butter knife, making this an "eat with your hands" situation) is topped with a heavy-handed scoop of smooth, mashed avocado, bright Meyer lemon, heirloom tomato pieces, chimichurri sauce, watermelon radishes, pickled beets, microgreens, and a dusting of queso fresco. From the abstract swipe of evergreen herb sauce to the artfully composed slices of root vegetables, it practically poses on the plate. This dish is also offered for $9, but you can add a poached egg for a small upcharge. Mine came out extra runny, but if you like your egg whites translucent, go for it.

On a cloudy Tuesday morning, most of the tables were full, and I watched at least three other patrons snap photos of their food. As one employee said of the dishes' aesthetic, "They always go off in this kitchen, and I absolutely love it."

COFFEE PARLOR
2944 Clark Ave., Long Beach, (562) 354-6540, www.copalb.com

GREG NAGEL

Braised Perfection

Find Fonda Moderna and Drink Bar

Whenever I think of chef Danny Godinez, I think of two things: the best chilaquiles I've ever had at Anepalco, and copious amounts of booze, usually in the form of distilled agave spirits. Naturally, his new spot in Tustin that just soft-opened at the Mess Hall Market also includes Drink Bar (Godinez's bar program), where I found a cocktail that's a throwback to both. The Red Queen Margarita uses traditional chilaquiles ingredients: dried epazote, guajillo pepper-infused tequila, and jamaica for color. It's all shaken over ice with agave syrup and lime, then served in a dimpled rocks glass.

The result is something familiar and homey, and it's a good beverage to celebrate this new food hall. It's so new, in fact, that it lacked a Yelp review on my first visit, and even Google Maps drew a blank.

Drink Bar, which is the only booze purveyor in the place, offers a full spectrum of craft cocktails, a pour-your-own wine cruvinet, and macro and craft beers.

Aside from the margarita, the cocktail program at Drink Bar is diverse and can easily fit the other cuisines happening in the food hall. Enrique Cervantes is the 23-year-old prodigy behind the program, which includes approachable Tustin-centric drinks such as a Butterfly Martini, a Mandarin Caipirinha, a Bacon Old Fashioned, and even an Irish Cooler to get you warmed up.

But Godinez didn't stop there; he also installed an all-in-one *taquería* called Fonda Moderna that runs the tacosphere with several different styles of regionality, flavors and prime cuts of beef.

It seems as if the menu is an elevator to achieve higher taco consciousness, and

Eat & Drink This Now

» GREG NAGEL

Godinez and chef Juan Vera can press the button on whichever floor might meet your innermost taco desires. Want a taste of Baja? There's crispy fish, plump Pacific shrimp, or even sweet lobster. Want to stop on the vegan floor? There's a gluten-free cauliflower tortilla with Mexican squash or stewed birria-style mushrooms. Need to get your street taco on? The cecina balances the salt-pounded flank steak with rich, blended avocado and a deep-*roja* pepper sauce.

Ready to get buck-wild in the penthouse? Check out the Mishima Wagyu, prime rib-eye, filet mignon, New York, or even surf-and-turf taco. Surprisingly, some varieties are still in the $6 price zone.

On the Fonda side, I fell in love with the guisados. "You have to go to LA to get good guisados, right?" asks Godinez as he slides his glasses up his nose. The birria taco is served open-faced with an ample pile of shredded beef soaking in its own juices. Pro tip: Grab a small salsa cup to catch the drippings as you fold it; otherwise, this taco can make it rain. The birria has an intense concentration of flavors bathed in umami, and you won't want to put it down until it's gone.

My answer to Godinez's question. Instead of Boyle Heights for great guisados, I just have to brave the streets of Tustin for a great drink and taco.

FONDA MODERNA AND DRINK BAR at the Mess Hall Market inside Tustin Flight, 1705 Flight Way, Tustin, (949) 333-2111, flighttustin.com/mess-hall-market.

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July 2019 Wine of The Month

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With the summer sun making (heat) waves and the June gloom hopefully gone, it's time to focus on **refreshing wines for the warm season**. Of course, we're leading with this amazing Rosé from Washington State, part of a collaboration between Charles Smith (K Vintners, Charles Smith Wines) and Charles Bieler (Three Thieves, BIELER Pere et Fils & Gotham Project). Made from 71% Syrah, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Mourvedre, 4% Grenache, 2% Counoise and 1% Cinsault, the sum of these parts makes for a beautiful, thirst-quenching wine with great underlying acidity, in other words, the perfect wine to feature for July (and the stylized American flag label certainly is *apropos*!)

The nose leads with lush fruits, watermelon, peach and mixed orchard fruit punch finishing with a touch of salinity, hints of apple and rose petal. The mouthfeel is lush and rich with beautiful sweet fruits dancing across the tongue. Watermelon, strawberry cream and white peach lead to plum punch and a touch of crème fraîche. **Excellent acidity keeps the wine lively and uplifted on the palate.** The finish is clean, rounded and refreshing-- reiterating sweet spring fruits that last and last. Stock up on this one for summer! **Perfect for Independence Day parties and beyond.**

@mrhitime on Instagram & Twitter

COACHELLA LOOKS DIFFERENT THIS YEAR

PHOTO BY CSAIRA AKNAY COURTESY OF A24

Flower Crowns of Terror

Ari Aster's *Midsommar* is a beautiful, horrific nightmare

BY AIMEE MURILLO

Ari Aster's debut horror film, *Hereditary*, explored the depths of grief and the shattering of the stable family unit, while an insane demonic cult loomed nearby, ready to exact a preordained script. His sophomore feature, *Midsommar*, is a companion to *Hereditary*, in that an insane pagan cult looms nearby, ready to exact a preordained script. But *Midsommar* is a masterpiece all its own.

If it wasn't clear before, let it be known here: Aster has arrived.

For many viewers, including myself, *Hereditary*'s graphic deaths and Toni Collette's tortured mother figure were a truly unsettling combination. *Midsommar* takes those elements and elevates them to dizzying heights—sometimes through optical camera tricks mimicking mushroom drug trips, while other times through gruesome imagery disrupting the frame. Viewers are transfixed by the storyline and idyllic location, unable to look away at its most horrific moments. The experience is akin to the plight of the film's main characters. American travelers observing the rituals of a remote Swedish village named Halsingland, where they learn firsthand the terrifying consequences of their curiosity.

Midsommar begins with a frantic Dani (Florence Pugh) trying to reach her sister and parents after a series of disturbing messages alarm her. She seeks comfort from her boyfriend, Christian (Jack Reynor), who, unbeknownst to Dani, has been meaning to break up with her for more than a year. But after learning the devastating fate of her family, Christian stays with Dani, who is now a dazed shell of a person struggling to get through her grief and clinging to Christian for social and emotional support. When she learns he and a group of friends—Mark (Will Poulter), Pelle (Vilhelm Blomgren) and Josh (William Jackson Harper)—are traveling to Sweden to witness a once-every-90-years festival called Midsommar, she decides to tag along.

The gang are moved by the pastoral beauty and calm of Halsingland, as well as its warm inhabitants, and take to consuming shrooms once there. Pelle is a native of the Swedish commune where Midsommar takes place, so he is their guide through much of the villagers' customs and behaviors. Said customs turn out to be more and more barbaric, but Christian and the others insist on keeping an open mind. Dani, on the other hand, senses more disturbing events are to come, and she and the rest are soon unable to escape the clutches of the cheery Swedes' traditions.

The film is washed in daylight, since the characters arrive during the period of midnight sun that blankets northern Europe. Even without the tension of night usually used in horror films, we are disoriented by the constant paradise the Halsingland folk present. It is what we *don't* see that makes us fearful, as there is a constant darkness hiding within the brightness and suspicious motives among the sunny dispositions. One might consider *Midsommar* a modern homage or a film influenced by *The Wicker Man* (and, in one scene, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*), but it seems more inspired by the darker, original versions of Grimms' Fairy Tales, in which namesake characters meet violent and sinister ends for moral-learning.

Pugh, whom I enjoyed in *Fighting With My Family* earlier this year, is extraordinary here as Dani. She exhibits a mastery of emotional range, allowing us into her character's descents into grief and madness. Like Collette in *Hereditary*, she's the anchor of this story and grapples through so much pain, even without encountering strange cults (although grief was explored much more in the previous film). Dani's early loss only haunts her in visceral, nightmarish callbacks.

With a lengthy runtime of two-plus hours, it might seem as if there's too much plot to digest, but there's enough detail to make it thoroughly engrossing. It's paced so well that the eventual "holy shit" ending becomes bigger than what anyone expected (including the cast members, who were said to have sat in stunned silence for a full 10 minutes after their first viewing). What's surprising, however, is the film's humor; besides having a good sense of visually affecting viewers, Aster has a morbid sense of comedy, and there's plenty of hilarious asides thrown around to make it even more captivating.

Aster has said that *Midsommar* might be his last horror film, but I hope that isn't the case. Virtually unknown before *Hereditary*, he's now one of the few directors of this era to have upended the genre in a way that has spurred discussion and excitement among fans. Both of his features have the power to remain in the cultural conversation for decades to come, not to mention leave a viewer shaken for many nights after watching—one can only wonder what his demented vision will concoct next.

AMURILLO@OCWEEKLY.COM

MIDSOMMAR

was written and directed by Ari Aster; and stars Florence Pugh, Jack Reynor and William Jackson Harper

Robert Smith, Don't Cry

BY MATT COKER

Midsommar. See "Flower Crowns of Terror," page 20. *Starlight Cinema City, (714) 970-6700; also at Starlight Triangle Cinemas, (714) 650-4300, starlightcinemas.com. Thurs., July 4, 10:45 a.m., 1:45, 4:45, 7:45 & 10:45 p.m. $6-$12.*

Jaws. An enormous, man-eating great white shark terrorizes beach goers on Amity Island. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., July 4, noon, Sun., 5 & 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Requiem for a Dream. A pair (Jared Leto and Marlon Wayans) try to make their and others' dreams come true by selling heroin—only to have addiction screw up those plans. *Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 2:30, 6 & 8:30 p.m., Sun., 8 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

The Adventures of Robin Hood. A Saxon lord (Errol Flynn) leads a rebel army to fight a prince (Claude Rains) oppressing the masses. *Bowers Museum, (714) 567-3677. Fri., 6 p.m. $10-$15.*

Kerry Tribe: Double. The artist's single-channel video work has five women who nominally resemble one another reflecting on subjects ranging from their impressions of Los Angeles to their participation in this project. *Grand Central Art Center, www.grandcentralartcenter.com. Opening reception, Fri., 7 p.m. Free, exhibit, Tues.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free.*

A Letter to Momo. Presented in Japanese with English subtitles, Momo discovers a trio of mischievous spirit creatures in her mother's attic that may help her uncover what her father had been trying to tell her. *The Source OC, thesourceoc.com. Fri., 7:30 p.m. Free.*

The Sandlot. A new kid in town tries to fit in by playing baseball with a ball signed by Babe Ruth. Total fantasy; kids don't play outside. *The Plunge, (714) 390-7771. Fri., 8 p.m. Free.*

Hercules. The teenage Hercules (voiced by Tate Donovan) must perform a rite of passage on Earth to prove he's worthy of joining the wrecking crew on Mt. Olympus. *Chaparral Park, (714) 765-5155. Fri., dusk. Free.*

Incredibles 2. Bob Parr/Mr. Incredible (voiced by Craig T. Nelson) takes care of the kids while his wife, Helen/Elastigirl (Holly Hunter), is out saving the world. *Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort & Marina, (949) 729-3863. Fri., dusk. Free, but there is a fee to park.*

The Italian Job. Charlie Croker (Michael Caine) leads a plot to steal a gold shipment from the streets of Turin by creating a traffic jam. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat., noon. 2:30 & 5 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Shrek. A grumpy ogre (voiced by Mike Myers) must rescue a princess (Cameron Diaz) for an evil lord (John Lithgow). *Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort and Marina, (949) 729-3863. Sat., dusk. Free, but there is a fee to park.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. The pioneering midnight movie starts with the car of sweethearts Brad and Janet (Barry Bostwick and Susan Sarandon) breaking down near the eerie mansion of Dr. Frank-N-Furter (Tim Curry). Live shadow-cast troupe Midnight Insanity performs. *Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Sat. 11:55 p.m. $9-$12.*

Frailty. Bill Paxton plays a father who enlists his two young sons to help him kill what appear to be ordinary people. However, dad claims they are demons a visiting angel instructed him to slay. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Mon.-Tues., 2:30, 5:30 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Hamlet. Forced to avenge his father's death but paralyzed by looming war, Hamlet (Benedict Cumberbatch) rages against the impossibility of his predicament, threatening his sanity and the state's security. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Mon., 7 p.m. $18.*

Playing With Fire. The radical subculture FIRE embraces frugality and financial optimization to achieve independence. *Edwards Brea Stadium East 12, (714) 482-7342. Mon., 7:30 p.m. $12.*

The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part. Lego Duplo space invaders are wrecking everything. *Various Regal/Edwards theaters, regmovies.com. Tues., 10 a.m. $1.*

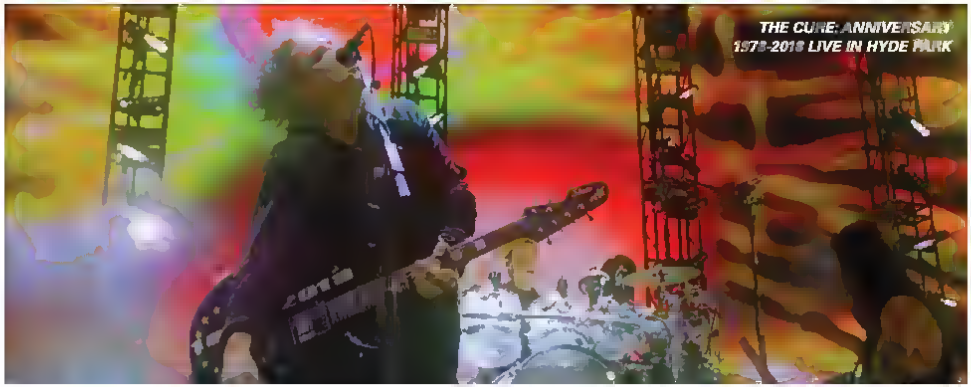
The Wizard of Oz. Dorothy (Judy Garland), her dog Toto (Terry) and new friends the Scarecrow (Ray Bolger), the Tin Man (Jack Haley) and the Cowardly Lion (Bert Lahr) follow the Yellow Brick Road to Emerald City in hopes the Great and Powerful Oz (Frank Morgan) can return the young lady and her little yapper home to Kansas. *Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas Laguna Niguel at Ocean Ranch Village, (949) 373-7900; also at Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas Rancho Santa Margarita at Santa Margarita Town Center, (949) 635-1888. Tues. & Thurs., July 11, 10 a.m. $6 (includes movie and snack pack with popcorn, fruit gummies and a small drink).*

Jurassic Park. Things go screwy on an island where cloned dinosaurs roam free in a wildlife park. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $8.*

How to Train Your Dragon. The Hidden World. Hiccup (voiced by Jay Baruchel) races Grimmel (F. Murray Abraham) to find a secret dragon utopia. *Various Regal/Edwards theaters, regmovies.com. Wed., 10 a.m. $1.*

The Met: Live in HD: Il Barbiere Di Siviglia. Rossini's madcap comedy was directed by Tony winner Bartlett Sher and sung in Italian with English subtitles. *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Wed., 1 & 7 p.m. $12.50.*

The Fountain. A scientist (Hugh Jackman) desperately searches for a medical breakthrough to save his cancer-stricken wife (Rachel Weisz). *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Wed.-Thurs., July 11, 2:30, 5:30 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.50.*



COURTESY OF TRAFALGAR RELEASING

Grease. Aussie exchange student Sandy (Olivia Newton-John) and bad-boy gang leader Danny (John Travolta) hooked up during the summer, but their relationship changes once school starts. *Starlight Cinema City, (714) 970-6700. Wed., 7 p.m. $5-$12.*

Alien. The crew of a space merchant vessel headed back to Earth are awakened from a deep sleep by a distress call from a nearby planet—and discover they are not alone. *Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

The Parent Trap. Twin sisters (played by Hayley Mills) swap places in a scheme to reunite their divorced parents (Maureen O'Hara and Brian Keith). *Fullerton Public Library, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., July 11, 1 p.m. Free.*

Despicable Me 3. The mumble-mouthed Minions want back their old crime boss, but the fired Gru (voiced by Steve Carell) considers himself retired. *Orange Public Library & History Center, (714) 288-2420. Thurs., July 11, 2 p.m. Free.*

Sound! Euphonium The Movie. Our Promise: A Brand New Day. See an exclusive recap of *Sound! Euphonium* seasons 1 and 2. Then watch Tatsuya Ishihara's anime sequel. Subtitled in English. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., July 11, 7 p.m. $10.50-$12.50.*

Dumbo. A young circus elephant teams with a mouse to achieve his full potential. *Victory Park, (714) 573-3326. Thurs., July 11, 8 p.m. Free.*

Ralph Breaks the Internet. Ralph (voiced by John C. Reilly) and Vanellope (Sarah Silverman) discover a wi fi router leads to adventure. *Civic Center Sunken Gardens, (714) 895-2860. Thurs., July 11, 8 p.m. Free.*

The Cure: Anniversary 1978-2018 Live in Hyde Park. Robert Smith called this show "a fabulous day none of us will ever forget." *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., July 11, 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.50; also at Art Theatre, arttheatrelongbeach.org. Thurs., July 11, 9 p.m. $14.*

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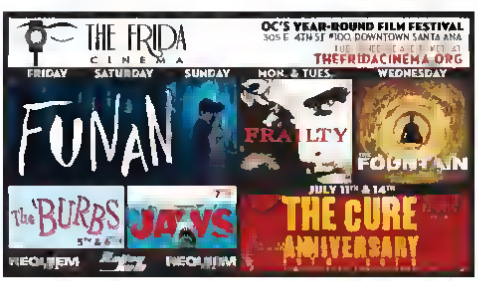

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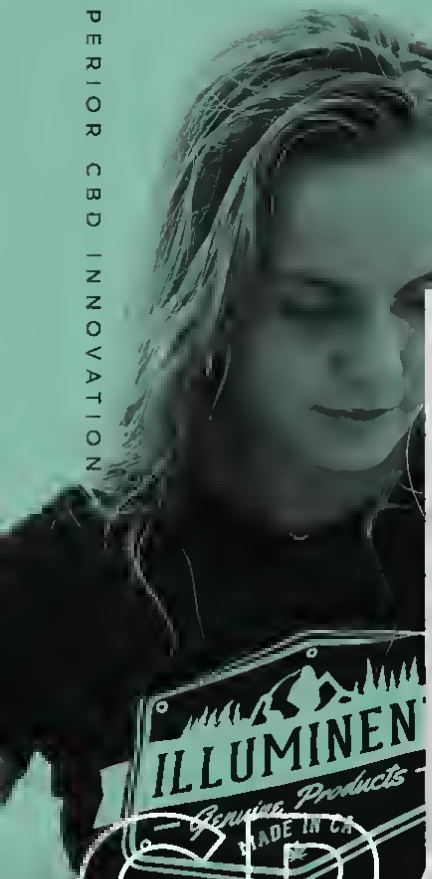

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Semper Fidelis

The Great Park offers a history of its former life

BY DAVE BARTON

Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) El Toro was built on what was the largest lima-bean field in North America, owned by farmer James Irvine Sr. The corps broke ground on the air station in 1942, and it opened to the public eight years later on Armed Forces Day. Reveling in the exhilarated patriotism from the painful victories of World War II, it was part public-relations maneuver/part charitable event, and the annual celebration eventually transformed into the El Toro Air Show.

Thousands of people attended the initial event, but that number expanded into millions by the time the base closed in 1997. It wasn't just ex-military who were in thrall to the old planes; the war scenarios presented—including a questionable atomic bomb simulation in the late 1950s/early '60s that featured explosive-created mushroom clouds—offered free entertainment the entire family could enjoy, even as the U.S. ventured into conflicts in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf.

El Toro was decommissioned in 1999, throwing it into a financial spin while numerous court cases championed the different ways the property could be used. Would swords be transformed into ploughshares, turning the space into a community park? Would developers get their hands on the property and build more homes? What about the toxic waste left by the military's presence?

The aptly named exhibition "A Brief History of the El Toro Air Show: 1950-1997," currently at the Great Park Gallery, rests on land that once belonged to the air station. It's a no-nonsense show, focused on fond memories and not overtly divisive politics, its handful of photography, paintings and posters curated with spartan taste by Cynthia Castaneda, Paul Gavin and the City of Irvine staff.

The mid-'90s video footage of Joe Conway III's "A Mission to Thrill: El Toro Air Show" playing in the gallery offers an unintentionally corny idea of what happened during those weekend events. Over stiff cue-card narration, there are quick cuts of Marines carrying weapons, playing as if they're engaging the enemy, "The Star-Spangled Banner" on the soundtrack is intermingled with bad '80s-style guitar-and-sax rock. There's footage of tanks, jets flying and swooping overhead, and cheering and waving crowds. Marines pose as Joe Rosenthal's *Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima* photograph, all while hawkers sell refreshments.

In two glass cases are jacket patches, plastic drink cups, tickets, T-shirts and other ephemera, most inconsequential enough that I wondered why they were included. The exception is Paul Gavin's process drawings, the painter's pen, ink and watercolor canvases became the go-to for the Air Show's poster art.

PAUL GAVIN

The first two blow-ups of Gavin's fighter jets chilling on a tarmac (*Orange County Centennial*) or soaring in the air offer idyllic scenes in which war machines and nature co-exist in an unexpected harmony, the artist's neatly drawn roads along the side of the base lined with trees and verdant fields of green, the sky a dappled blue, all of it dwarfed by the Saddleback mountains (*El Toro Winter*). The large reproductions are as high-quality as the original art would have been, but it's pleasant enough to look at until Gavin's work morphs into something else. As the Air Show grew in popularity, his scenes become less about idyll and more about fetish. What once offered quiet attention to detail suddenly has sizzle to sell—art transforming into propaganda. The ensuing posters are filled to the brim with planes in increasingly unbelievable, crowded compositions, the artist offering lovingly detailed explosions, soldiers in uniform and an overabundant waving of the flag.

Local photographer George Katzenberger's "Air Toon" series takes the opposite tack. Using a wide-angle lens and a 35mm film camera, his images are admiring enough of the sexy, streamlined curves of the aircraft to keep an aviaphile in full lather, but the exaggerated angles also antheopomorphize things, offering us visions of the planes that suggest grinning faces and cartoony eyes. An A-10 Thunderbolt II looks as if it's poking its machine-gun tongue out at the viewer, while simultaneously giving us a beady side-eye (*Warthog*). In others, the effect is distinctly animal or bug-like: a Northrop Grumman E-2C resembles the face of a goofy puppy smiling and lolling its tongue, the rear of an F-16 Fighting Falcon flashes its gaping ass end like a friendly cat, and a Lockheed F-117 Nighthawk is transformed into a metallic insect on steroids. The photographer's tongue-in-cheek images require a little work to "get" his initial vision, but it's worth the effort, delivering a few laughs while showing us taken-for-granted objects in new ways. It takes the war technology down a few notches, acknowledging its grandeur and its fearsome power, without falling into the moral rabbit hole of mythologizing it.

"A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EL TORO AIRSHOW: 1950-1997"
at the Great Park Gallery, Orange County Great Park, 8000 Great Park Blvd., Irvine, (949) 724-6880; www.cityofirvine.org/orange-county-great-park/exhibitions. Open Thurs.-Fri., noon-4 p.m., Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Through Aug. 18. Free.

ARTSOVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

July 5-11

KAWAII SLIME SHOW: Meet some of your favorite slime video stars, watch demos and play with and buy variations of the goo. Sat., 9 a.m. $40-$100. Hilton Anaheim, 777 W. Convention Way, Anaheim. (714) 750-4321; kawaiislimeshow.com.

***LA LOTERIA* BURLESQUE AND *BAILE*:** The Atomic Cherry Bombs troupe presents sultry routines themed around the Mexican game. Sun., 7 p.m. Free. 21+. BIGS Fullerton, 323 N. State College Blvd., Fullerton. (714) 526-4950; www.facebook.com/atomiccherrybombs.

ESSENTIAL OIL EXPERIENCE AND REMEDY BAR: Educator and wellness coach Melissa Panait holds workshops on the benefits of essential oils for everyday use, plus guests can craft their own blends. Mon., 6 p.m. $25. The CAMP, 2937 Bristol St., Costa Mesa. (949) 354-9581; www.eventbrite.com.

"BERRY TRIBE, DOUBLE": The artist presents a single-channel video in which she enlists actors to play their own interpretations of her based on a vague script. Open Tues.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Fri.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Through Sept. 22. Free. Grand Central Art Center, 125 N. Broadway, Santa Ana. (714) 567-7233; www.grandcentralartcenter.com.

VIDCON 2019: It's the midmate convention for YouTube personalities and stars, some of whom will join in panel discussions about their content. Wed.-July 13. Check website for times. $90-$850. Anaheim Convention Center, 800 W. Katella Ave., Anaheim. (714) 765-8950; vidcon.com.

"STREAMS OF CONSCIOUSNESS": Jang Ro brings a solo show of her dream-like abstract-expressionist paintings. Open Wed.-Mon., noon-5 p.m. Through July 29. Free. Sandstone Gallery, Laguna, 384-A N. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach. (949) 497-6775; sandstonegallery.com.

***MAMMA MIA!*:** The smash Broadway musical with the ABBA soundtrack focuses on a young bride to be's search for her real father. Wed.-Fri., 7:30 p.m., Sat., 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., 1 & 5:30 p.m. Through Aug. 4. $65-$105. Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Dr., Laguna Beach. (949) 497-2787; www.lagunaplayhouse.com.

FREE MONOPRINT WORKSHOP: This event runs in conjunction with the current gallery exhibit, "Linda Lyke: Field Notes." Lyke also gives a tour through her show and discusses her work. Thurs., July 11, 6:30 p.m. Free. The Muckenthaler Cultural Center & Gardens, 1201 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton. (714) 738-6595; themnck.org.

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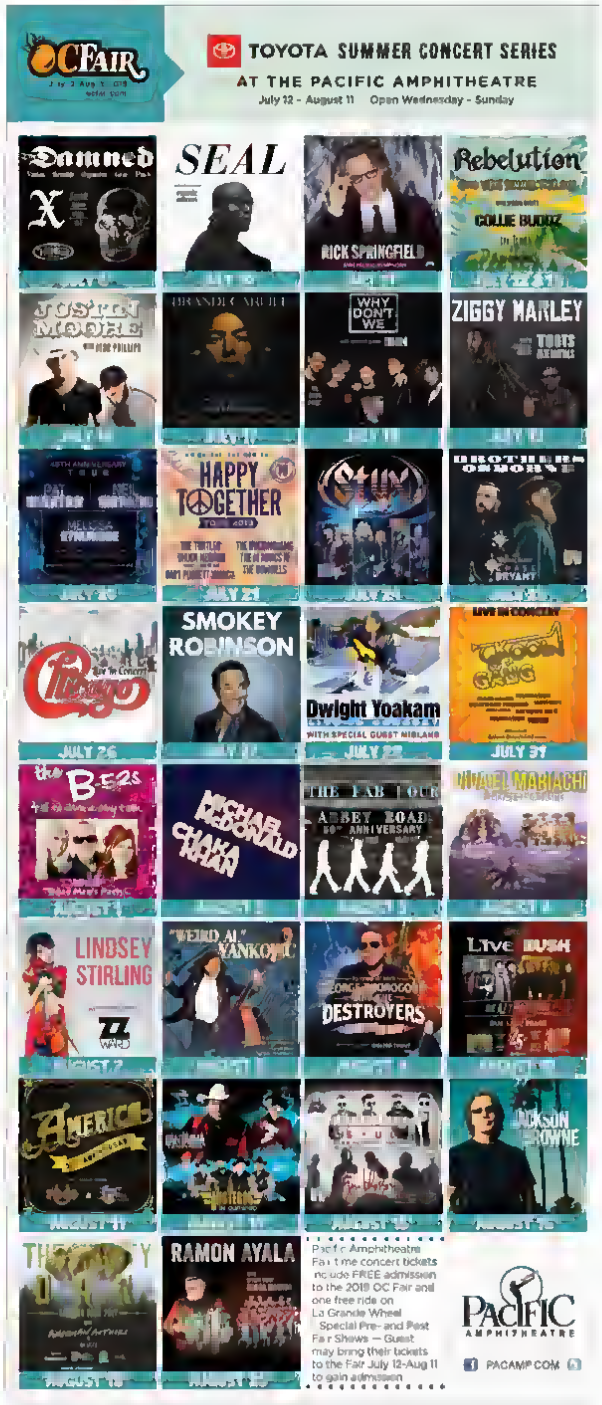
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My Plate Is Fullerton

A diary from a Day of Music

BY SCOTT FEINBLATT

It's always a challenge to figure out the best strategy to experience Day of Music Fullerton. Discovering new ways to explore what goes on in the city on the summer solstice, when the global event always occurs, has been an annual adventure for me. And it's usually a combination of using the festival's web page and another *Weekly* writer's recommendations or just hitting the ground running blindly to see, hear and photograph all of the musical acts and events I can—until burning out at some point in the late afternoon.

But this year, I thought I'd switch it up a bit and start my adventure at the time when I'd usually fizzle out. After doing some preliminary research, I compiled a strategy for navigating a cross-section of downtown Fullerton so as to experience a nice variety of evening acts. I started at Black Hole, where a punk-rock band called Love Canal was scheduled to play at 6 p.m. After parking at the SOCO District parking structure, I wandered over to the record store to see its packing-lot stage being swept and disassembled. The set had been canceled.

No time to fret, though, as my next destination was across Harbor Boulevard at the Old Spaghetti Factory. Thanks to the Black Hole situation, I had some time before my next scheduled show, so I followed my ears to Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen, where a sizable crowd had formed. I could hear some garage-sounding music, but I couldn't see who was performing, so I asked the two hostesses. They shook their beads, and one of them said, "We don't know, it's, like, a School of Rock kid's band." Later, I searched for details and found that Slidebar wasn't on the roster of businesses participating in Day of Music Fullerton.

At 6:30 p.m., an indie-rock act called Marble Blue was scheduled to perform on the upstairs, outdoor patio at the Old Spaghetti Factory. So, there I sat, reading a copy of the *Fullerton Observer*, and before I realized it, a young man had nonchalantly sat down on a chair, begun strumming a Fender and started crooning in a shaky tenor voice. This was Marble Blue. I'd expected the band would be a bandful of dishevelled-looking, flannel-wearing, twenty- to thirtysomethings playing angsty music. Perhaps this was the stripped-down version of the group, as their Facebook page shows three members. While the lad with the guitar performed covers of Bob Marley's "Redemption Song" and Otis Redding's "The Dock of the Bay," I couldn't help but imagine that this intimate concert would be equally at home echoing through the hallway of an apartment building filled with students—with the music coming from that apartment where that one guy with long hair and a guitar lives.

The next stop was Bourbon Street. 'Twas 7 p.m. when the jazz quartet the Bradford Project began a very classy set of music. Sandwiched between a television set (showing ESPN2) and the bar, these fellas made great use of their little space. It was difficult to tear myself away when the time came for me to see what else the evening had to offer.

As fate would have it, just as I stepped out of the bar, I found myself in the pathway of the Boombox Parade. This procession consisted of a few dozen people holding either functional or decorative boomboxes. I ran alongside them for a block or so, snapping photos as they crossed Commonwealth en route to the Downtown Fullerton Plaza. In classic parade fashion, after the main procession had passed, one more marcher came scrambling along, looking for the rest of the pack. Dressed as a boombox was Corky Nepomuceno, who owns Fullerton Foundry and is the executive director of Day of Music Fullerton. After I pointed in the direction her procession had gone, she bustled on her way, and I ambled on mine.

On the way to Pour Company on Wilshire, I popped into Half Off Books, where I can usually find a decently priced, used DVD or Blu-ray. I've been on the lookout for a used copy of *Iron Man 3* for a while, but my access to the "I" section was obstructed by a charming concert by Ukulele Jukebox-USA, who were performing a variety of folk and rock songs. I joined the decent-sized crowd for a few minutes before shuffling on.

When I got to my next stop, Swamp Bucket was already in full swing. One man was playing percussion (congas and bongos, mostly) while another played guitar. The guitarist's voice was deep and gravelly, and the outfit's raw, stripped-down renditions of rock and punk tunes were irresistible. From the moment they performed the Sex Pistols' "God Save the Queen," they had won the crowd, a mix of aging punk rockers and uptown girls.

I then stopped in at Comic Book Hideout, where a group with the colorful name Aloha From Hell were getting ready to play. The five members of the band were dressed—to varying degrees—in Hawaiian garb, and their set was a stomping hybrid of punk, rock and ... island, I suppose, what with the slide guitar and all.

As I wandered out of the shop, I could hear music coming from all directions. Various groups of people followed their itineraries or stomachs to the venues that would provide them with their next musical tastes (and/or meals) of the day. The atmosphere resembled what one might feel while wandering around a university campus on a festive Friday evening. There was simply a party in every direction. And on it went.

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Roots Don't Fail Me Now

Coachella should remember its past as it moves toward the future

BY HIYAZ PIRAHI

The pre-sale for the 21st Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival went live June 14, but its typical SOLD OUT post never showed up. Fan chatter among buyers online concluded early-bird tickets for Weekend 1 likely did sell out, but Weekend 2 might not have. Both weekends eventually did so, though, with wannabe early-birders being offered a wait-list spot in case purchasers drop out. (More tickets will go on sale in January 2020.)

That initial sluggishness could be a sign of the times. Since Coachella's launch in 1999, the wealth of American music festivals has been overwhelming. While we used to have a handful of strong fests across the country, now, everywhere from Sacramento (Aftershock) to Atlanta (Shaky Knees/Beats) to Delaware (Firefly)—and most mid-level markets in between—are home to or within reasonable driving distance of a multiday music festival sometime during the year.

Though there's plenty to choose from, there's also an oversaturation of similar performers across lineups, which has taken a heavy toll on each fest's identity. The effect didn't go unnoticed. *The New York Times* famously didn't cover Coachella and Bonnaroo in 2016 because "their bookings used to be somewhat exciting, if exciting means special and special means rare and rare means meaningful, they aren't anymore." Within the past five years, this sentiment has partly been to blame for the closure of high-profile festivals such as FYF (Los Angeles), Pemberton (Canada) and Sasquatch (Washington)—all of which struggled to get people through the gates.

Goldenvoice and its mastermind Paul Tollett have a history of offering initially exclusive or near-exclusive performances near the top lines—think Jane's Addiction in '01, Pixies and Kraftwerk in '04, Paul McCartney in '09, Jay Z and Gorillaz in '10, Guns N' Roses in '16, Beyoncé in '18—but in 2019, Coachella headliners Childish Gambino, Tame Impala and Ariana Grande could be found in differing combinations at Lollapalooza, Bonnaroo and Austin City Limits.

Original Coachella 2019 headliners Justin Timberlake and Kanye West reportedly fell out at the last minute—JT for illness and Ye because his ambition to build a 60,000-person video dome and perform in the round inside of it was too lofty to pull off. Coachella couldn't help this, but they could control who the replacements were. And when you're one of the most name-dropped music festivals in the world, sharing multiple headliners with other such fests takes away the shine for which fans have waited all year.

NIYAZ PIRANI

There is a challenge Goldenvoice is responsible for a large percentage of the most notable music reunions of the past two decades, and no longer do (indie/hard) rock bands and older electronic music styles draw masses of people to the Empire Polo Field. Headline-level rap and hip-hop outfits, as well as popular DJs, are the main reasons the majority of the crowd attend multigenre events these days. Not taking into account that for many attendees, the location itself is a magical place, Coachella has still worked to push itself in different directions over the past five years, catering to the tastes of an increasingly genre-bouncing audience by including megastars and world music—such as Korean and Japanese pop.

Twenty years ago, Coachella's lineup reflected modern tastes while recognizing performers from the '70s and '80s (and sometimes earlier periods). As time shifted, so did the lineup, but this vibe has most always been the foundation of the festival. Coachella will never make everyone happy, but a strong return to its roots may be exactly what is needed to WOW the world again. That means focusing on top billings/big reunions that reflect primarily the late '80s to mid-2000s. They say rock is past its prime, but everything old becomes new again. Rap is the new rock, and it's gone emo (see Lil Uzi Vert; Juice WRLD). We're poised for a return to form led by the biggest culture creator on this side of the globe, and the future could rock if we want it to.

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COURTESY OF THE OC FAIR

Friday

ARTHUR ALEXANDER BAND; SHIFTED TIDE, DANNY OSBORNE, MALDITAS OROGAS, ROOM 304, ANXIOUS ANNIE 7 p.m. $5 21+ The Doll Hut, 107 S. Adams St., Anaheim. (562) 277-0075. www.worldfamousdollhut.com.

COSMIC GATE. 9 p.m., $20; guest list free before 10 p.m. 21+. Time Nightclub, 1875 Newport Blvd., Ste. B245, Costa Mesa. timenightclub.com.

THE MOON JAYS 8 p.m., $10, all ages. The Fifth, 1650 S. Harbor Blvd., Anaheim. (714) 772-0899; www.thefifthoc.com.

STRANGELOVE—THE OEPECHE MODE EXPERIENCE. 7 p.m., $20; all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583; www.hob.com/anaheim.

Saturday

ANJUNADEEP PRESENTS REN RÖHMER 10:30 p.m. $5, 21+. La Santa Bar, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana. (714) 544-1995. lasantabar.com.

DRUGDEALER, MARASCHINO 9 p.m., $14-$18; all ages. Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

HARD ROCK/METAL TRIBUTE NIGHTCLUB 7 p.m., $10. 21+. Maloney's Concert Venue, 604 E. Dyer Rd., Santa Ana. (714) 979-6000.

THE QUAKES; THREE BLUE TEAR DROPS; BAT), THE THIRSTY CROWS 8 p.m., $20. 21+. Alexs Bar, 2513 E. Anaheim Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

SKAMIC CON LONG BEACH 8 p.m., $5; all ages. PCH Club, Long Beach, 0285 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach. (562) 596-1631. www.pocketeentertainment.org.

VICE. 9 p.m. $20; guest list free before 10 p.m. 21+. Time Nightclub. timenightclub.com.

Sunday

DWARVES, THE CROWD 2 p.m., $15, 21+. Alexs Bar. www.alexsbar.com.

EIGHTH-ANNUAL UPTOWN JAZZ FESTIVAL. Noon, free, all ages. Hoaglton Park, 6301 Myrtle Ave., Long Beach. (562) 570-1641. eptownlb.communecommenication.com/events.

MARCELLINA 8 p.m., $10-$12, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, www.hob.com/anaheim.

ROCK N' BLUES FESTIVAL. 11 a.m. free to Santa Ana residents and Bowers members, all ages. Bowers Meseum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana. (714) 567-3600; www.bowers.org.

Monday

THE CONVALESCENCE, A FEASTING BEAST 7 p.m. $8-$10. 21+. The Doll Hut, 107 S. Adams St., Anaheim. (562) 277-0075. canvalesceecefdllhut.brownpaperlackets.com.

EMAEL, NORTH MORLAN; SEA RITUAL. 8 p.m., free. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

Tuesday

DSR—JOURNEY TRIBUTE. 5 p.m. free, all ages. Fairview Park, 2501 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa. www.costamesafoundation.org.

Wednesday

CHRIS SHIFLETT, JADE JACKSON 7 p.m., $15. 21+. The Wayfarer. www.wayfarercm.com.

VACANT STARES, TERMINAL A, LUNGWERM 9 p.m., $5. 21+. Que Sera, 1523 E. Seventh St., Long Beach. (562) 599-6170; termanals.bandcamp.com.

Thursday, July 11

THE CRAMPS TRIRUTE NIGHT, WITH TEENAGE GOO GOO MUCK. 9 p.m., free. 21+. El Indio Botaeas y Cerveza, 309 W. Third St., Santa Ana, (714) 547-7868; www.instagram.com/eliedmbotaeasycerveza.

GREASE RANGERS, KAMIKAZE COPILOT, ALTER BOYS. 8 p.m., $5. 21+. The Wayfarer. www.wayfarercm.com.

MICK & THE STONES—ROLLING STONES TRIBUTE SHOW. 8:30 p.m., free, all ages. Ronald Reagan Park, 345 S. Weir Canyone Rd., Anaheim, (714) 765-4311. anaheim.net/play.

RICK SPRINGFIELD WITH PACIFIC SYMPHONY 8:15 p.m. $24-$95, all ages. Pacific Amphitheatre, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500; www.pacamp.com.

ROBERT DELONG, GOTHIC TROPIC. 9 p.m. $25. 21+. La Santa Bar. lasantabar.com.

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Prejudicial Statements

I'm a man from a very liberal background. Recently, a girl I started dating mentioned that she has "a thing for black guys." She also met my childhood best friend, a man of Korean descent, and commented that she found him handsome despite not typically being attracted to Asian guys. The position that I've always held is that we're attracted to individuals, not types, and it's wrong to have expectations of people based on race. I am worried she sees black men as stereotypes of athleticism, confidence and the other complicated constructions we've made about the black body, such as black men having bigger dicks. I also worry that she might see me as less masculine and less well-endowed because of my race. I tried to ask if she had ever checked herself for possible prejudice where her sexual desires are concerned, and she shut the conversation down by accusing me of trying to control her. I reassured her I wasn't trying to control her, but it's possible I was projecting the insecurity her comments stirred into the conversation. I'm trying to balance two components: my own insecurity and the possibility she's holding a legitimately prejudiced opinion that makes me uncomfortable. Any advice?

Seeking To Interrogate Newish Girlfriend's Statements

It's a big leap from "I have a thing for black guys" to "white guys aren't masculine or well-endowed," STINGS, and you made that leap on your own. So in addition to confronting your new girlfriend about her attitudes and assumptions you might want to give some thought to your own.

That said, the things your girlfriend has said about black and Asian men are legit problematic. When someone describes their attraction to a certain group, racial or otherwise, as "a thing," that usually means they see members of that group as things.

As for her comment about your Korean friend: Prevailing beauty standards shape our ideas about attractiveness, and those standards are shaped by our rabidly racist culture. A person socialized to only recognize the beauty of men or women of European descent may not even consider the attractiveness of people who aren't white. And then when someone of a different race does manage to make a blip on their sex radar, it comes as a surprise. But instead of reconsidering their ideas about attractiveness, a dumb fucking white person—even one from a liberal background—is likelier to say something stupid such as "I don't usually find Asian guys hot, but your Korean friend is attractive," rather than rethinking their assumptions about their desires.

It's a shame your girlfriend reacted defensively when you tried to bring all this up, STINGS, but sometimes people react defensively in the moment, then keep thinking about it. My advice: Keep bringing it up—but it would help if you owned your own shit during these conversations (and you have some shit of your own) rather than just self-righteously going after your girlfriend for her shit. I have to say, though: I disagree with you on one thing. People do have types, and there's nothing wrong with having types. It's a good idea to ask ourselves whether our "types" are actually ours and not just assigned to us by conventional standards of beauty (white, slim, young) or a thoughtless/fetishizing reaction to those standards (a desire to transgress with nonwhite, larger or older folks).

SavageLove

» DAN SAVAGE

I'm a middle-aged African American man. I'm single. I dress well. I'm fit, I cycle to work, I eat healthy, etc. I live in a basement apartment on a narrow street in a large city. My only window faces the street. After showering and pretty much whenever I'm home, I'm naked. A young white couple moved in across the street, and they have an unobstructed view. At first, I would notice the woman standing at the window looking my way as I toweled off. Then the male as well. And when I masturbate, I noticed them both making several passes by their windows to look. Later, I noticed the male coming out late in the evening when the view into my apartment is at its optimum to watch me masturbate. He seems very interested. The woman will come outside and sit on the steps in the morning and look directly at me while drinking her coffee. More than once, she has run her hand up the inside of her thigh as she's watching. Also, I've noticed that their shades, which used to be closed most of the time, are always wide open with lights on so I can clearly see them in their apartment. I'm sure the woman knows I want her—and the male seems to be exhibiting bi tendencies (something I'm not interested in at all). In your opinion, are they a voyeur couple or a submissive cuckold couple? How should I approach to seduce? If she's sitting on her steps, can I go over and say "Good morning" to break the ice? The other day, I left just as she was going out, and we walked past each other. I thought about saying something, but I don't want to appear to be chasing her.

Display Attracts Neighbors' Glazed Looks Everyday

I once dated a guy who was arrested in his own apartment at 10 in the morning for masturbating in front of an open window. Granted, he lived across the street from a school (a university, not a middle school), and that may have had something to do with it. But he was a white guy. DANGLE. And considering all the ways African American men are targeted by the police, I feel obligated to warn you about something you already know. Cops are always looking for an excuse to arrest or harass a black man.

That said, if everything is as you describe it—if this isn't a case of dickful thinking on your part—it sounds as if this couple is interested. "Interest" is a spectrum, of course, and they could find it interesting to live across the street from a hot, in-shape exhibitionist and difficult to look away without actually wanting to be fucked (her) or cuckolded (him) by you. But if they're staring into your apartment while you walk around naked and throwing open the curtains so you can stare into theirs, I'd say the ice has already been broken. So say hello the next time you run into them on the street. Keep that first convo light, neighborly and nonsexual, and see where it leads. But if during that first convo, they invite you over for a beer sometime… well, that's a Yahtzee. But even then, don't make any assumptions or sudden moves. Use your words, draw them out, make sure everyone is on the same page.

On the Lovecast (savagelovecast.com), it's the one minute-wonder show. Contact Dan via mail@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org.

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» JEFFERSON VANBILLIARD

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COURTESY OF AUTUMN BRANDS

About once a week, I find myself explaining that what I do for a living doesn't mean I have piles of free cannabis lying around my house (if only!). The next most popular query is what strain or company I think someone should try. For anyone looking for that classic euphoric experience of laughing at nothing while eating your body weight in food, I recommend Autumn Brands flowers as a permanent fixture in their medicine cabinet.

Hailing from Santa Barbara, the company started when two families with years of experience between them merged to bring their carefully crafted flowers to the masses. The 50 percent female-owned company goes to great lengths to ensure every bud is grown sustainably and without the use of harmful pesticides or chemicals.

The Strawberry Banana strain, at $32 per eighth, is known for its high THC content, as well as its pungent aroma of fruity berries and cream. This hybrid plant is your key to unlocking the perfect summertime session. With its effervescent taste, novice smokers may believe it's innocent, but beware. Too many tokes of this sour lettuce may leave you stranded on the nearest beach chair.

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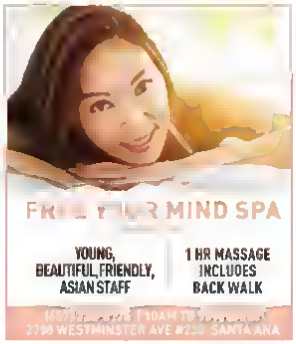
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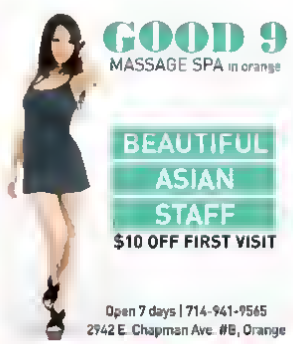
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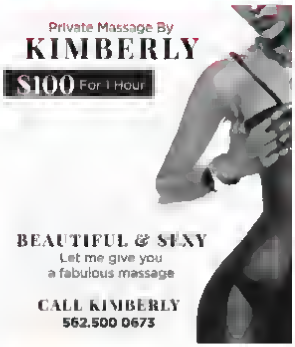
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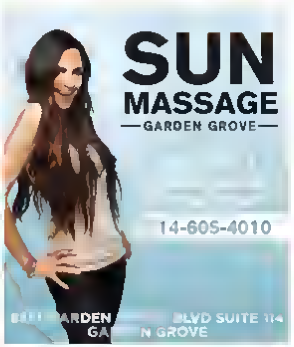
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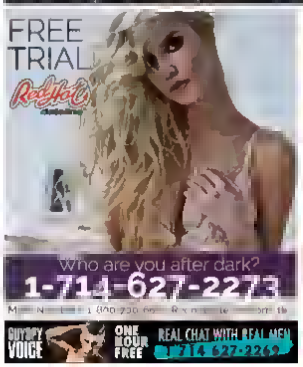
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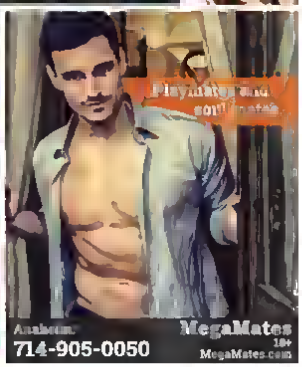
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The Weather Man

Looking for my father on a rare tour of Edwards Air Force Base

BY ANTHONY PIGNATARO

There's a Korean War-vintage Skyknight jet to my left and a Caribou transport plane that was all shot up during the siege of Khe Sanh on my right, but all I could think about was this weird, otherworldly whistling. It got louder the closer I got to the Skyknight, but no one else in our group seemed to notice it. It was probably wind blowing through the old jet, I thought—just one of those things that happens when you're standing on the edge of a dry lake the size of the Los Angeles basin—but even now, I'm not entirely certain.

You hear strange things at Edwards Air Force Base, located on the high desert just east of Los Angeles. My girlfriend, Angie, and I toured the base in early June. As we rolled into a parking spot near the base's West Gate, two thumps rocked the car so hard we thought someone hit us. They were actually sonic booms, caused by a nearby fighter jet pushing past 750 mph.

It was at Edwards (or more properly, Muroc Army Airfield, as it was known in 1947) where the world heard its first sonic boom. But what was revolutionary then—in an instant, test pilot Chuck Yeager had rendered obsolete every piston-engined warplane on the planet—is routine today. Some of the testing that goes on at Edwards seems trivial: a new cockpit display is installed in a fighter, or a transport gets a more efficient engine. Other testing, particularly of surveillance and combat drones, is highly classified. For that reason, Danny Bazzell, the base's head of community engagement and our tour guide, told us that photography was forbidden on the base, with just a few exceptions.

"This is the most historic Air Force base in the world," Bazzell told us as we got situated on the tour bus. It's also a big place. "You don't get anywhere quickly," he added. In *The Right Stuff*, Tom Wolfe described the 470 square miles that make up Edwards as looking "like some fossil landscape that had long since been left behind by the rest of terrestrial evolution." For Yeager, Edwards was simply "the ass-end of the moon." But the Air Force fell in love with Rogers and Rosamond dry lakes because, as then-Lieutenant Colonel Hap Arnold (later chief of the Army Air Corps during World War II) put it in 1932, they were "as level as a billiard table."

We saw this up close during a drive along the flight line. For a time, we trailed just behind a brand-new F-35 fighter, as if we were in city traffic. But the runways blend into the dry lakes, which stretch for miles in every direction. Ground control sometimes has to give detailed directions to pilots who've just landed so they can get back to the base.

There are extremely rare and historic aircraft scattered all over the base. At the West Gate, where we started our tour, there are early Air Force supersonic fighters, including one F-106 Delta Dart that was flown by the original Mercury 7 astronauts. Over at the North Gate, there's a B-52 bomber that was used as a mothership for the X-15 and prototype space vehicles. There's an ancient prototype YB-49 jet bomber parked in front of the restoration hangar on the north end of the base. In front of the test pilot's school, the last remaining NF-104—a tiny fighter with a rocket engine in the tail—is mounted on a stand. In 1963, Yeager attempted to break an altitude record in one of these planes, but it went out of control at 108,000 feet, and he was nearly killed while bailing out.

Spreading the aircraft around the base made sense in the pre-9/11 world, when anyone could drive up to the base, show the guard an ID, and then continue on in. But now, access is restricted, with just one public tour for 30 or so people given each month. The base is constructing a new museum, which will sit just outside West Gate, but that won't be finished for at least another year.

That I could name virtually every aircraft I saw at Edwards was because of my father, Frank Pignataro. When I was a boy, we'd stand in our back yard in Whittier, and he'd quiz me on the different types of planes lined up to land at LAX. When I was older, we'd go to air shows, where he'd do the same thing with the jets we saw. Aircraft were a huge part of his life. One of his cousins, Jean, designed aircraft flight manuals and later the crew patch for the 1975 Apollo-Soyuz spaceflight with the Russians.

Another cousin was a flight engineer for Pan Am; he was killed in 1957 when his plane crashed in the Pacific for reasons that remain unknown.

Frank was an engineer at Rockwell International and later Boeing and had worked for many years on the Space Shuttle (his brother Gus was also an aerospace engineer, though with the U.S. Navy). And in the early 1960s, my dad had been stationed at Edwards. I've seen photos of him from that time, skinny and awkward in his Air Force uniform, with none of the husky confidence I knew growing up. Though Edwards was known for swaggering test pilots, my dad had been a weather observer, a lowly enlisted guy who launched weather balloons.

When my dad enlisted, the base was, in Wolfe's words, "the apex of the pyramid of the right stuff itself." Yeager had become director of flight test operations and a living legend. Pilots such as Neil Armstrong were taking the X-15 rocket plane up so high they might as well have been in space. Today, much of the most secret research at Edwards is on combat and surveillance drones. Aircraft flown by pilots who never leave the office aren't glamorous, but that's the reality today.

ANTHONY PIGNATARO

My father understood this well. His time at Edwards was far removed from the world Wolfe glamorized in *The Right Stuff*. He served a few years, earned a couple of stripes, then got an honorable discharge in 1963. (To the day he died, his framed discharge papers were on the wall of his home office.) He never really talked about his time in the Air Force, but one story sticks out: He and a few other guys had been talking in the barracks about politics, religion and history. On his way back to his bunk, Frank had a revelation—that had been the first time he'd really thought since he put on the uniform.

Though far from a radical, he had no use for the rigorous uniformity of military life, which could be both incredibly serious and mind-numbing. While researching my father's old Air Force unit for this story (the 12th Weather Squadron, Detachment 48), I discovered his squadron patch (an anemometer on a field of lightning bolts) and the official Air Weather Service song. Here's the chorus, which is, at best, very earnest: "We are the men/The Weather men/We may be wrong/Oh, now and then/But when you see/Our planes on high/Just remember we're the ones/Who let them fly."

As you might expect, our base tour didn't include the Edwards weather station. But it also didn't include the one place most civilians with a passing knowledge of Edwards want to see: Pancho Barnes' Happy Bottom Riding Club, the notorious bar for test pilots. It was consumed by a fire in 1953, in the middle of Barnes' lawsuit against the Air Force, which was attempting to condemn the place to make way for a new runway. Barnes always suspected the Air Force had torched the bar, but an official cause was never found. In any case, the runway was never built, and today, the ruins sit within the base's small arms shooting range, which is off-limits to the general public.

Death is everywhere at Edwards, if you know where to look. The desert around Edwards is littered with the bones of the world's most spectacular aircraft, and the base itself is named for Glen Edwards, a popular test pilot who died in 1948 while testing the YB-49 flying wing. Pilots died at Edwards at a phenomenal rate, especially in the 1950s. In the tiny base museum, you can see an eerie photo of test pilots Mel Apt and Iven Kincheloe. They seem young and happy. Apt was killed in the X-2 in 1956, just a few seconds after becoming the first human being to fly three times the speed of sound; Kincheloe died two years later when his F-104 starfighter went out of control shortly after takeoff and he ejected into the ground.

As for my father, he died in 2007. For many years, I figured he would have hated touring the base, so I never asked if he'd like to go out there for a tour. But as Angie and I drove away, I suddenly thought otherwise. His perspective and historical knowledge would have been invaluable, and I don't doubt that the others on the bus would have had many questions. All he would have had to do was talk about planes, and he would have loved that.

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